

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, BL
SUBJ: COCA SUBSTITUTION

PASS TO: S/NM, AA/LA, & SER/INC

THE FOLLOWING PAID ADVERTISEMENT APPEARED IN THE LOCAL DAILY NEWS-
PAPER PRESENCIA ON DECEMBER 22, WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO S/NM
AND AID/W: QUOTE COCA PRODUCERS TO THE PUBLIC OPINION. WE FILL-
WORKERS, PEASANTS OF THE SUB-CENTRAL DISTRICT OF OCOBAYA AND OF
CUTUSUMA DISTRICT, PROVINCE OF SUD YUNGAS OF LA PAZ COMMUNICATE
THAT IN A GENERAL MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 11, 1976 WE DECIDED TO
TELL THE PUBLIC OF OUR PLAN TO DEFEND THE CULTIVATION OF COCA,
THAT WE IN NO WAY WILL ACCEPT ITS CHANGE FOR ANY OTHER PRODUCTS,
AND THAT WE WILL CONTINUE RAISING COCA BECAUSE IT IS OUR DAILY
BREAD. WITH THE COCA PROCEEDS WE SUSTAIN OUR FAMILIES AND EDUCATE
OUR CHILDREN AND STILL WE CANNOT MEET OUR NEEDS. IN THE FIELD, WE
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PEASANTS LIVE IN MISERY, IN GREAT POVERTY, AND THEY THAT WANT TO
TAKE AWAY OUR RIGHT TO CULTIVATE COCA WANT TO TAKE AWAY OUR RIGHT
TO LIFE UNDER THE PRETEXT OF WANTING TO CHANGE PRODUCTS AND TO FUL-
FILL LONG TERM LOAN COMMITMENTS MADE BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OUR GOVERNMENT. WE, THE PEASANTS, ARE NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THOSE AGREEMENTS BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT THEY ARE ONLY PROMISES, SINCE
WE, AS THE WORKERS, KNOW OUR LANDS ARE NOT GOOD FOR ANY OTHER

CULTIVATION, THEY ARE STEEP AND BROKEN LANDS IN WHICH ONLY COCA WILL GROW. NEITHER CAN WE RAISE CATTLE BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH LAND FOR THIS TYPE OF WORK ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES. EVEN IF THEY SEND TO US HUNDREDS OF ENGINEERS, TECHNICANS OR AGRONOMISTS, THEY CANNOT SOLVE THIS PROBLEM BECAUSE WE, AS PEASANTS, KNOW OUR LAND BETTER THAN AN ENGINEER; NO OTHER PRODUCT WILL YIELD AS MUCH AS COCA, BECAUSE THIS IS LIKE OUR MONTHLY SALARY. THEREFORE, AS OF THIS DATE, WE WILL NOT PERMIT ANY COMMISSIONERS TO COME TO REGISTER OR TAKE A CENSUS OF OUR COCA LANDS, AND WE ARE WILLING TO GIVE OUR LIVES IN DEFENSE OF OUR EFFORTS; IF WE MEN GIVE UP, OUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN WILL STAND IN OUR DEFENSE. FROM THIS DATE ON, WE ARE IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY. WE WILL CARRY OUT HUNGER-STRIKES IN PROTEST; AT PRESENT, WE HAVE PREPARED LANDS FOR COCA PLANT ACTIONS AND WE HAVE TO CONTINUE WORKING IT WITH GREATER STRENGTH TO MEET OUR PRESENT NEEDS. WE PRODUCE COCA FOR OUR BROTHERS THE MINERS, OUR ALTIPLANO BROTHERS AND OUR BROTHERS IN THE FACTORIES. WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT COCAINE BUT WE OPPOSE THE COCAINE TRAFFICKERS. SOME FOREIGNERS CAME TO OUR COUNTRY TO TEACH QUOTE THE BAD HABIT UNQUOTE OF MANUFACTURING COCAINE, BUT NOW THEY WANT TO PUT THE BLAME ON US; THEY DO NOT REALIZE THAT THE PRINCIPAL CULPRITS ARE THE COCAINE-PRODUCERS AND THE BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES WHO PERMITTED THE ENTRY OF SUCH FOREIGNERS. NOW THEY WANT TO REMEDY THE SITUATION WHEN IT IS TOO LATE. WITH NO FURTHER STATEMENTS WE END THIS DOCUMENT. (SIGNED BY 16 PEOPLE). UNQUOTE.

2. MISSION HAS CONSULTED WITH MR WINSTON ESTREMADOIRO, THE COORDINATOR FOR COCA SUBSTITUTION ACTIVITIES FOR THE MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR AND AGRICULTURE. HIS EXPLANATION FOR THIS ADVERTISEMENT UNCLASSIFIED

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IS THAT BEFORE THE CREATION OF A CLEARING HOUSE FOR INFORMATION ON COCA SUBSTITUTION (HIS OFFICE), THE TWO MINISTRIES PROVIDED MATERIAL TO THE PRESS ON COCA REGISTRATION AND CROP SUBSTITUTION WHICH TENDED TO BE CONFUSING AND SOMETIMES CONTRADICTORY. MISINTERPRETATION OR MISUNDERSTANDING OF THESE NEWS RELEASES WAS TO BE EXPECTED, AND INDEED SUCH HAS OCCURRED IN AT LEAST THE ARTICLE IN QUESTION. IN SUMMARY, HE ATTRIBUTES NO PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE ADVERTISEMENT.

3. MISSION ALSO CONTACTED NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO INITIALLY FEEL THE ARTICLE DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY MEASURABLE SWELL OF SENTIMENT AGAINST COCA SUBSTITUTION PROGRAMS, AND ARE INFORMALLY ATTEMPTING TO CONFIRM THIS. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT COCA SUBSTITUTION ACTIVITIES TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ESTABLISHED CULTURAL ATTITUDES AND TRADITIONAL CULTIVATION PRACTICES OF THE YUNGAS FARMERS, IN ADDITION TO INCOME SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS, TO AVOID PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE.

4. COMMENT: MISSION IS NOT ALARMED BY A SMALL AND PRESUMABLY
LOOSELY ORGANIZED GROUP REACTING TO THE UPCOMING REGISTRATION
PROGRAM: HOWEVER, WE ARE ALERTED TO THE FACT THAT COCA SUBSTITUTION
PROGRAMS MUST PROCEED IN THE MOST CAUTIOUS AND CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER
POSSIBLE TO AVOID A BACKLASH EFFECT WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE THE
BOLIVIAN COCA SUBSTITUTION EFFORT.
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